



## Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) Pilot Frequently Asked Questions

### The application process

**How does a school district apply to be part of the WaKIDS pilot?** We are trying to keep the application process simple for school districts. You will need to fill in minimal information about which staff will be involved in the pilot at the district level, and information about the schools that will participate. Not all schools in a district need to participate. Not all classrooms within a school need to participate. The application is available by e-mailing WaKIDS Coordinator Dana Ziemba at [dana.ziemba@k12.wa.us](mailto:dana.ziemba@k12.wa.us). Applications are due May 20, 2010.

**Can individual schools apply?** Yes, individual schools and even teachers are welcome to apply. There are some district-level signatures and administration involvement required, but the whole district does not have to participate.

**Can we see the assessment of multiple domains prior to application process?** The assessment tools will be identified in late June, so they will not be known before applications are due. The WaKIDS pilot is intended to compare various assessment tools and processes to help inform decisions about next steps for WaKIDS, so we ask participating districts to be willing to test whichever tools they receive.

### The assessment tools

**What will the assessment process measure?** The assessment process will yield information for teachers in four domains: literacy/language; social and emotional development; physical development; and cognitive/numeracy.

**What assessment tools are being considered at this point?** A request for qualifications and quotes will be released in early May so that interested vendors can submit proposals. The vendors' proposals must align with our state's performance goals (these will be posted online), must be linguistically sensitive and appropriate. The tools selected must be of the highest technical quality, and there will be an evaluation of all proposals to ensure that our criteria is met.

There will be three "bundles" of assessments in the pilot. Teachers will pilot one "bundle." The bundle could include a single assessment tool to measure the performance goals across all four domains, or the bundle could include multiple tools to measure the performance goals across all four domains.

**In what languages will the assessment tools be available?** It is the intent of WaKIDS to be linguistically and culturally sensitive. WaKIDS should measure the abilities of the child, not the acquisition of the English language. We will be able to answer this question after vendors and tools are selected.



To learn more, visit [www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/pilot.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/pilot.aspx)

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## Administering the pilot assessment process

**About how long will each assessment take to administer per child?** It will depend upon which assessment bundle a teacher receives. Part of the WaKIDS pilot comparison is asking kindergarten teachers to share information on the administration of the assessment: How long it took to administer and complete paperwork, how easy it was to administer, and whether and how it helped improve learning. An RFP is being issued to contract with a research institute to complete this comparison analysis.

**Will the assessment tools be administered one-on-one or in a group setting?** Again, that will depend on which tools are selected and which bundle a teacher receives. It is possible that an assessment will be administered and results collected over a period of time through small- or large-group observation. Or it is possible a teacher will be administering a one-on-one assessment while the rest of the class is engaged in other intentional learning activities.

**Will K teachers use these "bundles" throughout the school year or mostly at the beginning?** It will depend upon the assessment tools selected and the bundle a teacher gets.

**Will the K teacher use the "bundle" to assess all students in their class or only selected students?** All students in the class. The vision for WaKIDS is that it will provide useful information to teachers to inform instruction for improving each child's learning.

**If we already do a family connection in August, do we continue to use our format or do we have to do the pilots?** Many districts already have a family connection component for incoming kindergarten students. Districts may choose to continue with their existing programs so long as they meet the WaKIDS pilot criteria. Districts that do not have a family connection program will get to design their own process (see the pilot application for a description of the family connection criteria).

**Is there a specific, required format for the early learning collaboration meetings?** Yes. There will be a format to facilitate and guide discussions. That will be given to participating districts.

**Should special education preschools be involved?** Absolutely, we would encourage districts to involve all early learning staff and partners in this process. The intent of the WaKIDS early learning collaboration is to engage preschool teachers, early care providers, and kindergarten teachers in conversations about what information would be most useful to exchange. District special education preschool teachers could play an integral part in lending their expertise in child development to this process.

**What training for teachers is expected?** The training is planned for the first two weeks in August. East of the mountains training will be August 2 to 4 and west of the mountains will be August 11 to 13.

**What are the two phases of the pilot?** The pilot is divided into two phases. More details about the timeline are in the April 29, 2010 presentation posted on the WaKIDS web page: [www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/pilot.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/pilot.aspx).

**If pilot teachers already use some assessment process, should they keep doing that in addition to being part of the pilot?** It depends on the purpose of those assessments. If the pur-

pose is to determine a child's primary language, or to know in which class to place a child, then districts will most likely continue that process. If the purpose is to provide information so that kindergarten teachers have an in-depth understanding of where students are developmentally, then they should not use their present assessments.

## Roles for teachers and districts

**Should all kindergarten teachers in a pilot district or school participate?** We encourage districts to include all interested kindergarten teachers and schools on your pilot application. We will know what regional and community representation we need for a valid sample size after all applications have been received.

**If a school is selected, are all kindergarten teachers expected to participate?** Not all teachers within a school or district need to participate.

## Pilot regions

**How many regions are there and where are they located in the state?** We want to ensure that the pilot represents all students, families and communities around the entire state. There are five designated regions: Northeast; Southeast; Southwest; Puget Sound and Peninsula. We will be posting a map of these regions online.

## Funding

**Is there funding for districts from OSPI/DEL to support release time for kindergarten teachers to implement assessments (i.e. "bundles") and home visits?** The WaKIDS Pilot Application has information about funding and teacher compensation.

## After the pilot

**After the pilot is complete and OSPI/DEL has created a final tool, will it become a mandatory assessment?** Not necessarily. Right now, our state is piloting a kindergarten readiness assessment process. The Department of Early Learning and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction—in collaboration with Thrive by Five Washington—must report to the Governor and Legislature on the outcomes of this pilot. Decisions about next steps would be made following that report.



Thank you for your interest in the WaKIDS pilot!  
Still have questions? E-mail [Dana.Ziemba@k12.wa.us](mailto:Dana.Ziemba@k12.wa.us)